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in keeping—hang from various coigns of vantage in African nettings, some green, some gold. Several Oriental instruments of music, barbaric and curious, hang upon the wall, while "bits" of Oriental pottery and dim, graven or sculptured metal, are artistically placed all about the room.

A room in thoroughly boudoir taste was lately designed by a London decorative art company. The walls were hung with satin brocade, rose du Barry covered with an Adam design in yellow ivory, airily and gracefully Pompeian, as the real Adam designs usually were. The satin hangings were set in panels and edged with narrow mouldings of gold. The cornice and dado were structural mouldings of scroll and shell in gold, while the lower part of the wall was panelled in flatted white, outlined by pale gold. The ceiling was treated in the same manner, and the curtains were of satin like the walls in ground color, with the ivory designs, however, much more delicate and less sculptural, more like fine tracery. This difference entirely changed the tone of the window drapings from that of the wall panels and relieved the ensemble from any monotony of effect. The upholstery of the fragile-looking but graceful chairs was similar to the curtains, and the backs of the chairs themselves were in frail converging lines something like the "lyre" backs of the last century. The rest of the furnishing was a shine and shimmer of satin wood and ormolu, of Sèvres porcelain and fine gold, vases, urns, tazzas, clocks, and a general decorative maze of mythical creatures with human faces and inhuman tails, floating in an atmosphere of gold and pale rose. The floor of course was parquetered, polished like satin-wood, and covered with a square carpet of rose du Barry, beneath an arabesque of chiselled ivory.

Another boudoir was less expensive and in another scheme of color, but even more elegant and pleasing. Instead of satin brocade the walls were panelled with Lincrusta-Walton. These panels were of the most delicate sky blue decorated with reliefs in porcelain-like white. The reliefs were the usual classic urn festooned with garlands, and in delicacy of color, purity of form, and whiteness of relief strongly resembled the Wedgwood jasper ware as used for mural decoration. The frieze was flat, with cameo-like medallions of the same pure white on blue, and was separated from the panels beneath by a fine line of gold. The dado was of similar design, also rimmed with gold, and thus separated from the panels above. The chimney-piece of course was all of straight and vertical lines, and was of the purity of marble carved with classic chisel, even though in Lincrusta-Walton. The pier glass was set in a narrow frame of gold, with thoroughly Renaissance cupids sitting at the top and centre to toss airy festoons down to terminal female figures at the sides. The ceiling was of the same material as the panels, pale blue and white, but treated more largely—one solid piece of blue with central cameo, whence extended a maze of fairy-like festoons and waving arabesques to the cameo decorations at the four corners.

Very different from these is the boudoir of the mistress of a picturesque manor-house in Kent. Though it is called a boudoir it has nothing of the character but the name, for here the master seeks his wife when he comes in from the turnip field or from the hunt, and the children have not the slightest suspicion that "mamma's room" bears the name of a place "a boudoir!" This English boudoir is both homelike and home-made. The brick floor is covered with warm, soft rugs. The wainscoting is common straw matting, yellow faintly shot with red, and arranged lengthways around the walls, meeting the russet-green cretonne

hangings about three feet from the floor. A plain moulding of walnut takes the place of a dado from which the cretonne, laid in broad plaits, rises to the walnut cornice. The ceiling is also of the matting, which, with its mixture of yellow interwoven with fine threads of red, has the effect of old African gold. The furniture of this room is all of basket-work, pretty tables for books, or work, or afternoon tea, wicker arm-chairs capacious and luxuriously cushioned, jardinières of cane, set with artistic tiles and full of blooming plants; even the étagère is of bamboo, as well as the corner brackets. Only water-color paintings hang against the wall, suspended by long and very visible cords, from hooks hidden under the cornice.

MARGARET BERTHA WRIGHT.

#### ROUNDELS.

IN our present indefatigable resurrection of everything quaint and old, it is not surprising that at last

century portions of a set were found walled up in an old farm-house in Sussex. The farm-house until the time of Henry VIII. had been a monastery or convent, and when the ten little beechen disks, gayly painted and gilt and with scriptural texts upon them, were discovered, it was at first conjectured that they formed some sort of religious game allowed the nuns, though the verses accompanying the texts were coarse enough to put the most secular of cheeks to the blush. South Kensington Museum possesses one complete set and portions of two others, which are exhibited under glass cases on the wall. Roundels were invariably accompanied by a box in which to enclose them, and were always in sets of a dozen, never more, in deference to the superstition that Judas at the Lord's Supper made thirteen evermore an unlucky number. When not in use they were kept in their box of exactly their own dimensions, being never brought out except on holiday occasions. One of these boxes, turned by a lathe from solid beech and decorated, is kept with the South Kensington roundels.

Usually the roundels were a trifle less than six inches in diameter, although both smaller and larger ones exist. Earthenware plates, though not absolutely unknown, were still very uncommon before Elizabeth's reign, and therefore these little beechen dessert-plates being articles of luxury, in use only in households that could afford desserts, were highly decorated, as well as inscribed with verses. These verses surely ought to have been called roundelays, and were sometimes scriptural, sometimes satirical, oftenest rough jokes upon one or the other of the sexes, and often much too gross for modern tongues to repeat. The dainties were always served upon the unpainted side, the perfectly flat roundel without rim or edge being reversed to receive them. Roundels are sometimes very treacherous things. Thus we hear of one which betrays to our generation a girlish folly of the year 1589 in these words:

"And I wishe those girls that painted are  
Will find no other foode but painted fare."

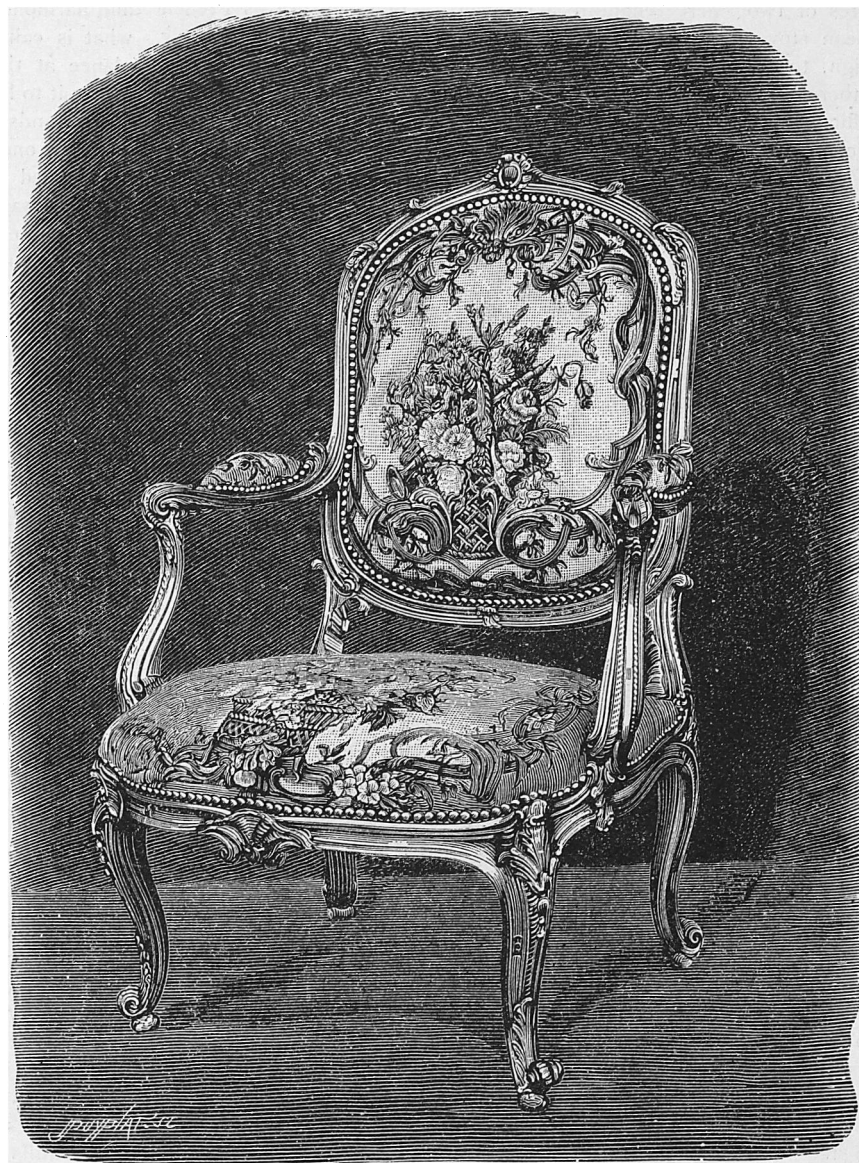
Another is even more malicious and says:

"A woman that is wilfull is a plague of the  
worst,  
As good live in hell as with a wyffe that is  
curste."

These inscriptions are in curious old English text, and the manner of spelling proves them to be not later than the time of Henry VII. or Henry VIII. Sometimes the motto or distich is around the edge or margin of the disk and the floral or other decoration fills the centre, and sometimes this arrangement is reversed and the illumination circles around the margin while the

rhymes fill an enclosed bit in the very centre.

Among the South Kensington roundels, eleven of one set are very brilliantly illuminated. They have a broad band of gilt around the edges decorated with alternate leaves and flowers, red lake being glazed over the gilding in places. Within this outer border comes another band of gilt, cut up with little knots of black at intervals, and within that band a central space is devoted to the motto or "posie" as it was called. This "posie" space is ornamented with boldly drawn scrolls, twists and knots, and entwined with two narrow scrolls on which two texts of scripture are minutely written. The "posie" itself consists of four rhyming lines of broad but not coarse jokes addressed to husbands, wives, and bachelors, and meant, therefore, for the guests at a mixed party. The texts are mostly drawn from the Book of Ecclesiastes as addressed, in a great measure, to the regulation of the tongue in the ordinary occupations of life. On another of the South Kensington series the writing is good Elizabethan court hand instead of old English text. The leaves



LOUIS XV. CHAIR COVERED WITH OLD GOBELIN TAPESTRY.

IN THE LATE HAMILTON COLLECTION.

modern taste has drawn the forgotten objects which our ancestors called "rundles" from their long oblivion and put them to uses not their own. In this nineteenth century resurrection the roundels are not their old selves, but copies or imitations, and they do not serve but decorate. They no longer circulate round festive boards as in the olden time, when yule logs burned and boars' heads frowned, but quietly decorate dining-room chimney pieces and buffets, the purpose of their original existence being much better served by modern inventions of porcelain and faience.

Roundels are little disks of beechwood curiously painted or illuminated, and bearing rhymes in old English text or written hand. They date principally from the time of the Tudor princes (after which they were superseded by faience), and were used at feasts to hold the comfits that supplemented the more substantial viands. Because of their comparatively perishable material, very few original sets are preserved to our day, although specimens of them still remain in some of the old halls and stately manors of England. In the last

and flowers of this set are not painted from nature, although a sort of strawberry is seen in most of them in connection with purely conventional leaves. One or two of this series bear oak leaves and acorns roughly drawn. Some of them show a good deal of strap work, and on all the designs vary, and the "posie" is different. Every roundel in every set is different in these respects from its fellows. In some of the South Kensington sets gilding prevails, broken up with black or colored designs. In one set the conventional flowers and knots are in bright vermilion lines on the bare yellow ground of the beechwood. The drawing is indifferent, but the painting and effect are clear and brilliant as on a Florentine missal. On some of the roundels a death's-head grins in the centre, with a rhyming legend running around it inside the wide mosaic-like border. Some seem to have no definiteness of artistic design but to follow a humor as wayward, although in miniature, as that of Raphael's Vatican arabesques. A set is described in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for the year 1794 as being exactly five inches in diameter and five-eighths of an inch in thickness, with a marginal gilt circle enclosing a curious group in gold, red, yellow, black, white, blue, and green, of such forms as hearts, true-lovers'-knots, crescents, wheels, dots, butterflies, caterpillars, fishes, leaves, and roses, differently expressed on the different roundels of the set and forming a brilliant circle around the posie. This posie's capital letters are all in the brightest vermilion, but all the other letters are a clear and legible black. One of the posies is in old English text:

"Lett wisdome rule well all thy wáies  
And sett thy mynde thy Lorde  
to please."

At Christmas time, when everything is garlanded with mistletoe and holly, and everything not Elizabethan English is out of artistic harmony with the spirit of the scene, roundels, as gifts and decorations, ought to have a distinguished place. Many an American amateur might find pleasure in the decoration of these flat beechen disks which may serve either for sweetmeats, to decorate dining-room dressers, to be clustered in groups of a dozen on walls, or to be set as medallions in the uncomely wooden chimney-pieces that are such an affliction to many an American household.

GEORGE CLARE.

#### USEFUL HINTS ON DECORATION.

In preparing a room to be thoroughly done it is proper to commence at the ceiling in every case. First, the ceiling and cornice are thoroughly washed and cleaned off, water being used freely; next, the walls are also washed thoroughly clean. If they have been papered care is taken to see that all paste and little strips of paper are removed. If the woodwork is in good condition, free from dents or holes, some "soda" water and a piece of pumice-stone are used to rub down all the woodwork in the room, most attention being paid to doors and shutters, as that, being generally the broadest work, shows irregularities most—all "soda"

water being washed off with clean water afterward. This being done, the ceiling and cornice should have a first coat of color. This is made by a mixture of white lead, patent driers, turpentine, and linseed oil, so as to be quite thin and oily. When this is done the walls are treated in the same way, the brush being worked up and down so as to get the color on evenly. The woodwork should now receive a coat, which need not be quite so oily as that used for walls and ceiling. Supposing this to be done, it is allowed to stand until the next day to get thoroughly dry. The work is then stopped or faced up, as it is called, which means that all dents, cracks, and joints are carefully stopped up with putty—this putty being made by adding whiting to stiff white lead, until it is of the same consistency as common putty (oil and whiting). All holes should be stopped quite level with the surface of the work, so as to avoid any bulgy appearance. The work should now

is agreed to, some of the white left from the third coat of coloring is tinted with yellow, until you get the required color for the ceiling. Most of this color is taken and thinned with linseed oil, so that when dry it shall have a good glossy surface. This is called the ground color for flatting upon. Now take the remainder of this color and add a little more white to it until it is a good shade lighter (if this were not done, your ceiling would, when flatted, be darker than you intended it, but by making it lighter it should dry exactly the shade required), and then put turpentine to it until it becomes quite thin; this is called flatting color. The ceiling should now have a coat of the ground color (which, as before intimated, should dry glossy), and should finally receive a coat of flatting, the color being used freely, and stippled with a stippler (a brush made for that purpose). This is a work that requires two or more to do, according to the size of the ceiling. Flatting should

always be done quickly, and on no account touched after the color has set, as it always shows the least mark if touched before dry. A ceiling, if properly done as directed, should look good, and solid in color. White is then tinted until the required color for the walls is obtained, these being grounded and flatted in the same manner as the ceiling.

The woodwork is then done in the same way, but the panels of doors and shutters are flatted first, then the stiles, and the mouldings last; all beads that are intended to be various colors are run in afterward. A ceiling requires four coats of oil color and one of flatting to look just right, as do also the walls. If the woodwork has been painted before, and is in good condition, it will not require so many coats. But if it is new wood, all knots and places that show any sap are touched over with patent knotting—a kind of varnish used for that purpose—before the first coat of color is put on. If the work is required to be varnished, the coat of flatting color is left out, and instead another coat of the ground color is used. For light colors, maple varnish is generally used, and for the darker ones pale oak varnish. There is another method of varnishing called flat varnishing. Some white wax is cut up thin, and melted in tur-



LOUIS XVI. EBONY CABINET.

IN THE LATE HAMILTON COLLECTION.

receive another coat of color, which should be a little thicker than the last, by adding more white lead to it, and a little turpentine (not much, however, as you only want to make your color a little harder, not to go dead or flat). This is also allowed to dry, and then a third coat is given to it. The work is now ready for grounding, as it is called, and if not already arranged, you should decide what the finishing colors are to be, as the work is now all white.

Let us suppose it is a dining-room that we are doing. It should look cheerful—no washy coloring, but everything to look rich and of a warm tone. A good effect may be got by a ceiling of a pale warm buff, walls of a rich salmon-color; doors and windows much darker salmon than walls; skirting darker still, inclining to a maroon. The cornice may have cool gray in it. Buff brighter, and stronger than ceiling, and salmon equal to strength of color on doors. Supposing this coloring

and a little drier, and some varnish is added to it. If this is used over work quickly, and stippled lightly when dry, it goes quite dull, and will stand washing. It is very useful, as by it a bright varnished surface may be made as dull as flatted work. Should the woodwork be in such a bad condition that four coats of color will not make it perfectly smooth, it must be filled up, as it is termed. There are two methods of doing this—one is by mixing some whiting and a little plaster together, and adding size to it until it is the same as stiff distemper color. The wood is first painted over with a thin coat of oil color, to give the whiting something to bind to, and when dry gone over with the whiting, which is rubbed down perfectly smooth with glass paper, and painted over with some linseed oil and driers. The addition of the plaster to the whiting is to enable the glass paper to cut well, otherwise the whiting would only clog the paper up,